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Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-02 NEA-07 SS-14 CA-01 PPT-01
PRS-01 /029 W
----------126870 251617Z /41
R 250730Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4938
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, AF
SUBJECT: TRAVELER CLAIMING TO BE ON USG-NARCOTICS RELATED
BUSINESS: RICHARD BLUM

REF: A) STATE 250776; B) TEL AVIV 7210 (NOTAL)

1. ANNOUNCED BY A TELEGRAM FROM EMBASSY TEL AVIV (REFTEL B), PROFESSOR RICHARD BLUM, WHO HAS A PART-TIME TIE WITH STANFORD LAW SCHOOL, ARRIVED IN KABUL ON SEPTEMBER 29 FOR A VISIT OF APPROXIMATELY TEN DAYS' DURATION. CLAIMING HE HAS BEEN, INTER ALIA, A CONSULTANT WITH THE OFFICE OF DRUG ABUSE POLICY AND CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S COMMITTEE ON DRUG ABUSE -- AND BEARING A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM CONGRESSMAN JAMES SCHEUER ADDRESSED TO AMBASSADOR ELIOT, PROFESSOR BLUM SOLICITED THE SUPPORT OF THE EMBASSY IN ARRANGING HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS, DOMESTIC TRAVEL, AND MEETINGS WITH LOCAL U.S. OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT NARCOTICS SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN.

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WM IN RESPONSE TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER'S DIRECT QUESTION, PROFESSOR BLUM ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HIS TRIP WAS "MOSTLY" PRIVATE, BUT IMPLIED THAT IT WAS ALSO SEMI-OFFICIAL. HE SAID HE WOULD BE REPORTING HIS FINDINGS TO THE WHITE HOUSE ODAP OFFICIALS WHO HAD BRIEFED HIM BEFORE THIS TRIP. SUBSEQUENTLY BLUM INDICATED JOURNALISTIC INTEREST, STATING HE REPORTED IN CAPACITY OF "AMATEUR" TO TWO SMALL OREGON NEWSPAPERS AND

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MIGHT BE WRITING FOR THE WASHINGTON POST. HIS ACCOMPANYING WIFE HAS BEEN HELPING THE SAN FRANCISCO ZOO. THEY WERE A VERY PLEASANT COUPLE AND MOST APPRECIATE OF THE HELP THE EMBASSY AND USIS GAVE THEM.

3. THE BLUMS MET ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE WITH AFGHAN OFFICIALS IN VARIOUS FIELDS. AS CUSTOMARY WITH VISITING AMERICAN JOURNALISTS, USIS INTRODUCED BLUM TO MFA DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION. ON OCCASION THIS MEETING, BLUM RAISED QUESTION OF INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD, INDICATING THAT THE WOULD BE WILLING TO RETURN IN JANUARY IF SUCH INTERVIEW COULD BE ARRANGED. MFA OFFICIAL REQUESTED LETTER FROM BLUM ON THIS MATTER WHICH EMBASSY LATER TRANSMITTED WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION. EMBASSY ALSO DIDN'T SUPPORT BLUM'S REQUEST FOR TRIP TO THE SENSITIVE WAKHAN CORRIDOR.

4. IN LIGHT OF THE REMARKS CONTAINED IN REFTEL A, WE WOULD BE INTERESTED TO LEARN FROM THE DEPARTMENT WHETHER OR NOT PROFESSOR BLUM HAD ANY OFFICIAL STATUS WHILE ON HIS TRIP TO HIS REGION.
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